

***Hibbertia sericosepala* (Dilleniaceae), a new species from Western Australia****Kevin R. Thiele**

Western Australian Herbarium, Department of Parks and Wildlife,  
Locked Bag 104, Bentley Delivery Centre, Western Australia 6983  
Email: kevin.thiele@dpaw.wa.gov.au

**Abstract**

Thiele, K.R. *Hibbertia sericosepala* (Dilleniaceae), a new species from Western Australia. *Nuytsia* 23: 479–482 (2013). *Hibbertia sericosepala* K.R.Thiele is described as new. Morphologically similar to *H. helianthemooides* (Turcz.) F.Muell. and *H. huegelii* (Endl.) F.Muell., *H. sericosepala* is distinctive in its combination of sepal and leaf indumentum, floral bract shape and anther and carpel number. It is endemic to the south-west of Western Australia.

**Introduction**

*Hibbertia* Andr. comprises c. 120 taxa in Western Australia. The great majority of species occur in the South West Botanical Province, with a few extending into immediately adjacent parts of the Eremaean Botanical Province. One species is restricted to the Pilbara bioregion and eight to the Kimberley region. The most recent complete revision of *Hibbertia* was that of Bentham (1856). Toelken (1995, 1998, 2000, 2010) revised a number of eastern and northern Australian species complexes, while Wheeler (2002a–d, 2004a,b) and more recently Wege and Thiele (2009) and Thiele (2009, 2012) have described many new taxa from Western Australia. Wheeler (2004c) provided a key to all Western Australian taxa known at that time, subsequently updated in Thiele (2009, 2012). An up-to-date key to *Hibbertia* in Western Australia is maintained at *KeyBase* (see <http://keybase.rbg.vic.gov.au/>).

Judy Wheeler, while curating material at the Western Australian Herbarium, phrase-named a number of putative new taxa including the one described here. First segregated in 2002 and given the name *H. sp. Gnangara* (J.R. Wheeler 2329) (Western Australian Herbarium 1998–), specimens of this taxon had been previously ascribed to *H. helianthemooides* (Turcz.) F.Muell., *H. huegelii* (Endl.) F.Muell. and *H. pachyrrhiza* Steud. Subsequent collecting and review of available material has confirmed that it is distinct; accordingly, it is here described as *H. sericosepala* K.R.Thiele.

**Taxonomy*****Hibbertia sericosepala* K.R.Thiele, *sp. nov.***

**Type:** Breera Road Reserve on the southern firebreak, Gingin, Western Australia, 20 September 2009, P. & J. Foss 372 (*holo*: PERTH 08193053; *iso*: AD, CANB, K).

*Hibbertia* sp. Gnangara (J.R. Wheeler 2329), Western Australian Herbarium, in *FloraBase*, <http://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au> [accessed 19 August 2013].

*Shrubs* 0.2–0.4 m high, often sprawling, resprouting from the rootstock after fire; branchlets pubescent with sparse to dense, crisped, ± appressed, pale grey hairs, sometimes mixed with sparse, longer, spreading, simple hairs. *Leaves* spreading, clustered into distinct fascicles, linear, (12–)20–35 mm long, 0.9–4 mm wide, the margins strongly recurved but usually not completely obscuring the undersurface; adaxial surface smooth (non-tuberculate), glabrescent, pubescent to pilose at first with abundant, loosely appressed to spreading, somewhat crisped, white to pale grey, simple hairs; abaxial surface glabrous to shortly pubescent with hairs similar to those on the adaxial surface but shorter except on the prominent midrib; apex obtuse to subacute. *Flowers* sessile, several together amongst the leaf fascicles; flower-subtending bracts broad, brown, scarious, broadly ovate to orbicular, 4–6 mm long, subacute to obtuse, the lower ones often with reduced leaf blades, sparsely to densely sericeous. *Sepals* 5, ovate to triangular, 7.5–10 mm long, densely long-sericeous or pilose throughout with ± straight or flexuous, whitish hairs spreading at c. 45–90° to surface; midribs not prominent; outer sepals acute to acuminate; inner sepals similar in size, apex shape and indumentum to the outer. *Petals* 5, yellow, obovate, 10–18 mm long, emarginate or entire. *Stamens* 25–30, all around the gynoecium, fused by their filaments into 5 distinct bundles; filaments 1.2–3.5 mm long; anthers rectangular, 1.5–2.0 mm long, dehiscing by introrse, longitudinal slits. *Staminodes* absent. *Carpels* 3(5); ovaries compressed-globular, glabrous; styles spreading excentrically from the carpel apex, c. 3 mm long. *Ovules* 2 per carpel. *Fruiting carpels* and seeds not seen.

*Diagnostic features.* *Hibbertia sericosepala* may be distinguished from all other Western Australian taxa by its combination of narrow, linear leaves with recurved margins, sessile flowers subtended by broad, scarious bracts, densely sericeous sepals, 25–30 stamens united into five bundles, and gynoecium 3(5)-carpellate and glabrous.

*Specimens examined.* WESTERNAUSTRALIA: Keysbrook, 10 Nov. 1999, R. Archer & M. Wood MET 20816 (PERTH); Keysbrook, 2 Nov. 1999, R. Archer MET 20815 (PERTH); Badgingarra National Park, 8 km W along Cadda Rd, off Brand Hwy, 8 Oct. 1985, M. Carter 412 (PERTH); 5.1 km E along Cadda Rd from junction of Munbinea Rd, 20 Sep. 2001, R. Davis 10100 (PERTH); Melaleuca Park, 4 July 1978, J. Dodd 14 (PERTH); Melaleuca Park, Gnangara, 8 Aug. 1978, J. Dodd 17 (PERTH); Wongondarra [Wongonderrah] Rd, Badgingarra, 15 Oct. 1978, J. Dodd 26 (PERTH); Wongonderrah Rd, Badgingarra, just W of Nambung River, 15 Oct. 1978, J. Dodd 28 (PERTH); Whitfield Brook, 1.6 km W of Brand Hwy, 15 June 1979, J. Dodd 40 (PERTH); Moore River National Park, 7 Oct. 1979, J. Dodd 50 (PERTH); W of Ellenbrook, S of Muchea, 8 Sep. 1992, E.A. Griffin 6801 (PERTH); Gnangara, 19 Sep. 1945, C.A. Gardner 7662 (PERTH); Gnangara, 19 Sep. 1945, C.A. Gardner 7689 (PERTH); Melaleuca Park conservation area, 12 km NE of Wanneroo, 19 Oct. 1993, N. Gibson & M.N. Lyons 1434 (PERTH); West Gironde, Gnangara, 10 Dec. 1965 J. Havel 224 (PERTH); Melaleuca Park, W of Bullsbrook, 17 Sep. 2000, M. Hislop 2127 (PERTH); Moore River National Park, 15 Sep. 1994, E.D. Kabay 592 (PERTH); Gnangara-Moore River State Forest, 11 Sep. 2008, D.A. Mickle & M.L. Swinburn 520 (PERTH); Gnangara-Moore River State Forest, 25 Sep. 2008, D.A. Mickle & M.L. Swinburn 521 (PERTH); Mimegarra Rd, 49 km by road SW of junction with Brand Hwy, 3 Sep. 1984, J.R. Wheeler 2329 (PERTH); Gnangara Pine Plantation, 22 Sep. 1981, S.H. Wheeler s.n. (PERTH); Chandala Nature Reserve, 2 Sep. 2006, Wildflower Society of WA/DEC IOPP 03/11 (PERTH); between Wanneroo and Yanchep, 27 Aug. 1957, C.L. Wilson 871 (PERTH).

*Phenology.* Most flowering specimens have been collected in September, with a smaller number in early October.

**Distribution and habitat.** Endemic in south-western Western Australia in the Swan Coastal Plain IBRA bioregion (Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts 2008), mostly between Badgingarra and the Gnangara area in the northern suburbs of Perth, with two disjunct collections (*R. Archer* MET 20815, *R. Archer & M. Wood* MET 20816) from west of Keysbrook, south of Perth. Occurs in *Banksia* woodland with heathy understorey on well-drained, acidic sands, sometimes over laterite.

**Conservation status.** *Hibbertia sericosepala* is relatively common and widespread, including in a number of nature reserves, and is not considered to be at risk.

**Etymology.** From the Latin *sericeus* (silken) and *sepala* (sepals), in reference to the distinctively densely sericeous sepals.

**Affinities.** *Hibbertia sericosepala* is morphologically most similar to *H. helianthemooides* and *H. huegelii*. The former has 12 or 13 stamens and glabrous or sparsely hairy sepals. The latter has consistently 5-carpellate flowers, sepals that are nearly glabrous to sparsely or moderately pubescent with usually shorter, more or less appressed hairs, and leaves that are generally longer (to 65 mm) and narrower with more tightly revolute margins and only the midrib visible beneath. The flower-subtending bracts in *H. huegelii* are narrower and more acute (to attenuate) than in *H. sericosepala*, and are often green and leaf-like in texture rather than scarios. Some specimens of *H. huegelii*, particularly from the inland parts of its range around Wongan Hills (e.g. *C. Howell* 554, *C.M. Parker* 260) and York (e.g. *K.R. Newbey* 881, *A. Sole* GS 4) but also from the Eneabba area (e.g. *R.D. Hoogland* 12009, *J.R. Wheeler* 2342), have more prominently hairy sepals than is usual for the species, and the hairs are often more spreading. The indumentum on these, however, is substantially less dense than in *H. sericosepala*, and the bracts are typical for *H. huegelii*. All specimens currently at PERTH can be confidently ascribed to one or the other species.

Most specimens of *H. sericosepala* have three carpels. One specimen from the Gnangara area (*M. Hislop* 2127) and the two disjunct specimens from the Keysbrook area have 5-carpellate flowers. They are identical with other specimens of *H. sericosepala* in all other respects.

Horn (2005), in a combined phylogenetic analysis of *Hibbertia* based on ITS and *rp116* gene sequences, placed *H. sericosepala* (as *H. sp. Gnangara*) in a well-supported clade comprising *H. depressa* Steud., *H. notibractea* J.R.Wheeler, *H. fitzgeraldensis* J.R.Wheeler, *H. hibbertioides* (Steud.) J.R.Wheeler and *H. rupicola* (S.Moore) C.A.Gardner. Of these, *H. depressa* is morphologically most similar to *H. sericosepala*, sharing with it spreading, sericeous hairs on the sepals and a tendency for the leaves and flowers to be fascicled. All these species, however, have substantially shorter leaves, smaller flowers and fewer stamens (9–17, the maximum in *H. rupicola*), than *H. sericosepala* and are readily distinguished from it. Only *H. hibbertioides* is geographically close to *H. sericosepala*, but occurs further east typically in wandoo woodlands on clay soils.

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